

THE GREEN CALDRON

A MAGAZINE OF FRESHMAN WRITING



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THE GREEN CALDRON is published four times a year by the Rhetoric Staff at the University of Illinois. Material is chosen from themes and examinations written by freshmen in the University. Permission to publish is obtained for all full themes, including those published anonymously. Parts of themes, however, are published at the discretion of the committee in charge.

Members of the committee in charge of *The Green Caldron* are R. P. Armato, Robert Bain, Thomas Boyle, Mary Trippet, and William McQueen, chairman.

Heat

KAREN MECKLER
Rhetoric 101, Theme 9

AS THE BUS INCHED ITS WAY ALONG THE TWISTING, treacherous asphalt, the lethargic occupants gazed out the window seeing only the steam rising from the arid wasteland. This was the Negev Desert in the middle of the afternoon and the passengers were experiencing heat they never thought possible on earth.

I was one of those passengers traveling to the famed Dead Sea. It was literally too hot to move, too hot to speak, almost too hot to breathe. We were told the temperature had risen to one hundred and thirty degrees, but our minds could not comprehend a figure that high. However, we had no trouble feeling the stifling, vaporous heat. Our clothes were drenched with sweat and there seemed to be an added layer of skin attached to our bodies. Tiny rivulets of water trickled down the back of my blouse and splashed to the already soaked seat. Our hair was wet and dripping, too, but we made no move to help ourselves. We were drained of strength completely. Yet, the sun continued to beat down on the bus and the surrounding areas. Everywhere we looked we saw the brilliant white rays touching the land. It gave the sand and the rocks an eerie glow and nothing seemed to have its true color. It was as if some madman had whitewashed the earth and everything on the surface. In some places, the beams looked like white columns coming from the sky to meet us.

The wind blew slightly, and it was a hot wind.⁷ We pulled the grimy bus windows down in hope of relief and found to our dismay that we were being blasted with hot air. We were, it seemed, inside a furnace—a furnace whose heat was intensified by the fan from an open vent. I felt that any minute I could burn up entirely. However, one cannot burn if one is so wet; one can only boil slowly.

After an endless ride the bus coughed, sputtered, and abruptly jerked to a stop. We could hear the hissing sigh of the radiator, and I thought it sounded much like the whisper of death. The driver turned to give us the information we wanted to hear: we had arrived at the Dead Sea.

There was an almost energetic scramble to disembark from the bus. We wanted to reach the blue water and swim in its coolness. At last there would be an escape from the sun. We hurried to the beach-house to change into swimsuits. As I walked, I noticed the salt rocks were bleached white and the sand crystals glistened where my foot crunched over them. Wondering how hot the ground was, I touched it gingerly and burned my hand.

We wore our shoes to the very edge of the water because of the burning ground beneath our feet. Then happily, joyously, we ran into the sea. After a few seconds, however, we discovered that the water too, was hot. It did

not boil, but it was warm enough to be very uncomfortable. Exposed to the sun in a hideous, salty bath we felt cheated, disgusted with the whole area and amazed that any place could be quite so miserable.

After an evening journey back to our hotel, we sat on the terrace and agreed that the Dead Sea should be buried.

How to Gain Will Power the Easy Way

ELLEN B. WATT

Rhetoric 102, Theme 6

I'VE HAD ENOUGH OF MY FATHER'S DECLARATIONS ON the necessity of learning self-control. Take dieting, for instance. I once went on a hunger strike to lose ten pounds in two weeks, but I was going to do it through my own kind of will power. Just then I heard my father, in his I-know-it-all-and-even-if-I-don't-it's-a-better-guess-than-you'd-ever-make tone of voice, saying, "Now listen, kid. You've got to use your head in a situation like this. Think it out, I say; always think it out! All you have to do to develop self-control is just *think* you don't want food. It's just a state of mind, kid. It's all in being a mature person. A mature person can think himself out of what he knows is wrong. That's all that will power is."

But my keen, calculating mind told me that there must be another, an easier way to gain will power. Thought is just too hard. It takes too much time and energy. So I was determined to invent some kind of external will power that could act on the person. Then I came upon a great plan—a plan to revolutionize will power.

The first step is the use of signs. For dieting I had signs all over the place—tacked on the bulletin board, dangling from the light fixtures, and smeared in lipstick all over the mirror. "You're splitting at the seams; what are you going to do about it, Tubby?" was pinned on a blue sheath in the closet. "Quit eating, you fat slob," met my gaze every time I peered into the mirror. During the scare of a few bad test scores, when I felt sure I would soon face the fate of flunking out, I posted a rather threatening note which read, "Dear Ellen: You are a lazy procrastinator with no intellectual curiosity who is just plain stupid." This was to give me the will power to study. Somehow it didn't work out as well as I expected. Every time I glance at it I think I must be innately stupid. And then I get depressed and curse the world for making me so stupid. Yet the sign does some good. At

least I'm not afraid to let the world know I'm stupid. What humility! What honesty!

Sometimes signs don't work as well as verbal outbursts. Whenever I'm faced with a double-dip banana ice cream cone and my will power seems just about to fail, I glare at myself in the mirror and shout, "Now control yourself, just control yourself! You must realize this is not right. It's wrong, wrong, wrong! However, right and wrong *are* relative concepts . . ." Then I pause to consider the brilliant phrase which has just been uttered from my lips. Perhaps I am not so stupid; perhaps I am really a budding genius! Then my thoughts wander as I fancy myself forming great concepts about the universe. I usually forget all about the double-dip banana ice cream cone.

But when I'm afraid to openly voice disapproval of my weak-willed self, I often write secret little notes. One such note recently read: "Your patron saint will descend from above and kill you if you touch that chocolate cream pie. Do you hear? He will murder you!" Then I crumpled it up and threw it away. But just the thought that it could happen was enough to make me hate chocolate cream pie for a whole day.

Of course, this external control of the will power can be applied to other facets of my life, too. It can be used for restraining my emotions during quiet hours, reading the foreign affairs section of *Time*, and controlling my inner feelings with regard to people who dislike John F. Kennedy. So it's really a very effective way to develop self-control and will power, especially if one doesn't like the thought method. But it can't work for everyone. For it to succeed, one must be afraid of his own threatening notes, willing to condemn himself by shouting at the mirror, and stupid enough to do it all.

The Seder

PRESTON L. SCHILLER

Rhetoric 102, Theme 5

THE WINE GUSHING OUT OF THE STOUT CASK-LIKE BOTTLE gurgled gaily as it filled the goblet with a dark crimson pool. Grandfather, his breath strong with the bit of schnops he had taken before dinner, beamed happily as I recited the brucha over the wine. When I squinted a little his florid face was almost as red as the wine I blessed. Grandma studied me with the astonished stare that the old always have when they finally realize that their little ones are growing up. Mom and Dad sat silently proud that their son was at last learning to become a man. A spring shower sent raindrops softly splattering against the screens, imparting an even more intimate air to this small family seder. *Nu Sarah, your boy's really getting to be quite a son, no?* . . .

The matzos were broken and everyone drank his wine. It was sweet, so sweet, on my tongue and lips. Sweet like cousin Shifra's kiss had been that afternoon. Sweet like the two soft lips and heavy breath I had tasted in the basement. *You won't tell my mom, will you David? You won't tell? . . .*

The fish was passed about. Gefilte fish. I took two pieces, for it was my favorite fish. They used to laugh at me at the grocery store. . . . *You know what that crap smells like, Dave? It smells like a nigger woman. . . .*

Grandma, her old yellow apron stained with rancid chicken fat, stood by the stove, the old black stove in the cold kitchen, closely watching the baking fish. Old Bobbeh, always the family mediator. *You know, totella, you shouldn't give your parents such a hard time. You know how hard they try. They give you a nice home, nice clothes. They mean well. . . .*

The yellow light from the dusty fixtures shone down on Grandpa's forehead as he read from the Haggadah. Zadie's wise face, set with the long semitic nose and deep sad eyes, reminded me of a sage whose picture was in my sefer at Hebrew school. It was Isaiah staring into the heavens with the sadness of the world reflected in his eyes, Isaiah, poet of Judah, pupil of Hosea, singing to the exiles of Zion. Isaiah the prophet foreseeing the return of the Jews to Eretz Yisroel. *How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of the messenger of good tidings, Who announces peace. . . .* Come, Grandpa, come. Come from behind that black-rimmed photo. Come out of the sea of tears your wife gave birth to. Come and fill this becher with the wine of your wizened life. Recreate the seder of my youth in the cocktail-filled dinners of my nights. Kum, Zadie, kum. Kum, fill my glass with wine and I shall ask you the Four Questions. . . .

*For behold, I create new heavens
And a new earth;
And the former shall not be remembered,
Nor come to mind.*

GLOSSARY

Seder: The name of the Passover dinner.

Schnops: Yiddish for alcohol, usually wine or whisky.

Brucha: Hebrew for prayer of blessing.

Matzos: Bread baked without yeast.

Gefilte fish: Mixture of white fish, haddock, etc.

Bobbeh: Yiddish for grandmother.

Haggadah: Passover prayer book.

Zadie: Yiddish for grandfather.

Sefer: Hebrew for book.

Eretz Yisroel: Hebrew for Land of Israel.

Becher: Yiddish for goblet.

Four Questions: Part of the Passover dinner service.

Fresh Water for the World

JOE MILES

Rhetoric 102, Theme 11

SEVERAL TIMES DURING SUMMER VACATIONS MY FAMILY has visited a small town in a very dry region of Utah. There the people have fought the effects of water shortage for one hundred years. As a five-year-old I noticed that the baseball park looked wrong because there was no grass on the field and I thought the ditches by the side of the streets looked strange. Later on I observed that the socially prominent members of the community were those who bought enough water to have grass in their back yards as well as in their front yards. I also noticed that the water shortage had kept the population down and had discouraged industry in the area. Expansion in an area without adequate water supplies is extremely difficult.

The whole United States may soon be encountering the effects of inadequate water supplies. Our water consumption has risen to an all-time high. We now use two hundred and fifty billion gallons of water per day. This is six times our 1900 consumption; in the next fifteen years, as our population increases twenty per cent, our water use will double again.¹

The average person uses about twenty gallons per day. He drinks two quarts; he uses five gallons to brush his teeth, shave, and wash his hands; he uses four gallons to flush the toilet; he requires twenty-five gallons to bathe. Industrial uses are much greater. One barrel of beer requires three hundred gallons of water, and producing one ton of steel requires sixty-five thousand gallons. One oil refinery uses more water per day than do the nine hundred thousand residents of Cleveland. Industry uses forty-seven per cent of the United States' water; irrigation requires forty-five per cent; individuals consume the other eight per cent.²

The result of the tremendous consumption of water in the United States and the rest of the world is a severe water shortage. One-third of the earth's surface is now arid or semi-arid. Israel, Greece, Australia, the Middle East, and the West Indies are all experiencing critical water problems. Inadequate supplies of water threaten industrial development in more than one-fourth of the states in our country. In 1956 more than one thousand cities in the United States rationed water. Jugged water has been sold for fifty cents a gallon in Dallas, Texas.³

¹ Blake Clark, "Fresh Water from the Sea," *Popular Science Monthly*, vol. 172 March, 1958), p. 118.

² *Ibid.*

³ *Ibid.*, pp. 116-118.

One might conclude that man does not know how to remove salt from sea water. Certainly if he did, he would not have a water problem on planet three-fourths of which is covered by oceans. However, man has known how to purify sea water for hundreds of years. As early as 1593 Sir Richard Hawkins used a crude still to purify ocean water while on a voyage in the South Seas. Solar energy was used to purify saline water in Chile in 1872.⁴ Over one hundred different methods have been used successfully to separate salt from pure water.⁵

Only economic considerations prevent man from solving his problem with ocean water. Drinking water for cities now costs thirty cents per thousand gallons, and irrigation water costs twelve cents per thousand gallons.⁶ However, saline water is now distilled at a cost between one and one-half and three dollars per thousand gallons.⁷ In order to make purified saline water as cheap as fresh water, scientists must discover a means of separating one hundred seventy-five pounds of salt from every thousand gallons of sea water at a cost of thirty cents.⁸ Such a discovery would be of vital importance as it would solve the water problem forever.

Because of the increasing need for a cheap method of purifying salt water, Congress passed the Saline Water Conversion Act in 1952. Under this act the United States Office of Saline Water awards contracts for research and development in the area of purification of sea water. Thus far there have been forty-nine contracts awarded.⁹ This research has resulted in three principal methods being used today.

Distillation is the oldest and still most widely used method. Distillation involves boiling the water and collecting the salt-free steam. There are two major economic problems encountered in this process: formation of scale on the pipes where the water is boiled, and the cost of the energy necessary to boil the water.¹⁰

Formation of scaly deposits on the pipes necessitates a costly shutdown of the plant while the pipes are cleaned. Several things have been tried to prevent scale formation. Cold brine was run over the hot pipes with the result that the expansion and contraction of the pipes caused the scale to flake off. Chemicals were added to prevent precipitation of the scaly ma-

⁴ *Utilization of Saline Water*, United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, 1954, pp. 73-74.

⁵ Cecil B. Ellis, *Fresh Water from the Ocean* (New York, 1954), p. 3.

⁶ For Water Shortage—Relief from the Sea," *U. S. News and World Report*, vol. 42, (March 8, 1957), p. 114.

⁷ "Brewing a Drink of Sea Water Is Easy—But Still Costly," *Business Week*, No. 1480, (Jan. 11, 1958), p. 132.

⁸ Charles H. Coleman, "Drink the Ocean," *The American Mercury*, vol. 88, (June 1959), p. 140.

⁹ "Fresh Water from Saline Supplies Expensive but Promising," *The American City*, vol. 72, (June, 1957), p. 9.

¹⁰ "For Water Shortage—Relief from the Sea," p. 118.

terial.¹¹ Steel pipes were replaced with an expensive copper-nickel alloy. Although all of these methods worked to some extent, none eliminated plant shutdowns.¹²

Recently Walter L. Badger, a former professor of chemical engineering at the University of Michigan, decided to seed the boiling water with the scaly substance itself. The result was that the salt formed around the seeded pellets rather than on the pipes. With the Badger method pipes of steel are adequate.¹³ The scale problem has been greatly lessened by Badger's discovery.

Two devices are being used to lower the cost of the energy to boil the water. One, multi-stage distillation, involves reusing heat several times. The heat given off as the water cools is captured and used to heat new water. As the number of times the heat is reused increases, so does the efficiency of the system. This process is repeated as many as eleven times with the same heat. The second device involves lowering the pressure of the air over the water, enabling the water to boil at a lower temperature. Obviously less energy is required to heat the water to its new boiling temperature.¹⁴

Almost all distillation plants use a combination of these two energy-reducing processes, and most new ones will use the Badger method as well. Distillation is currently the most common method of purifying sea water. It is used by almost all passenger ships and navies. There are also large distilleries in Kuwait and the Netherlands West Indies. The Pacific Gas and Electric Company, the only United States Industrial plant to use sea water, distills Pacific Ocean water at one dollar and ninety-six cents per thousand gallons.¹⁵

Solar distillation is a second method on which a good deal of work has been done. An apparatus looking much like a miniature greenhouse is placed over the sea water. As the water is evaporated by the sun's rays, it rises to the sloping roof, condenses, and runs down the roof to a trough. The principal advantage of the process is that the energy is free. The biggest drawback is that the apparatus is expensive and covers a large area for the relatively small amount of water it produces.¹⁶

An individual solar still can give only one gallon a day when the weather is good.¹⁷ An acre covered with these stills produces only 2,500 gallons a day.¹⁸ As a result of this limited production, solar distillation has been used

¹¹ "Brewing a Drink of Sea Water Is Easy—But Still Costly," p. 134.

¹² Roger Greene, "Breakthrough Seen in Struggle to Turn Salt Water into Fresh," *Champaign-Urbana Courier*, April 19, 1960, p. 21, col. 2.

¹³ *Ibid.*, p. 21.

¹⁴ Richard F. Dempewolff, "Sea Water for a Thirsty World," *Popular Mechanics Magazine*, vol. 111, (May, 1959), p. 121.

¹⁵ Clark, "Fresh Water from the Sea," pp. 118-119.

¹⁶ "Brewing a Drink of Sea Water Is Easy—But Still Costly," p. 135.

¹⁷ Clark, "Fresh Water from the Sea," p. 266.

¹⁸ Dempewolff, "Sea Water for a Thirsty World," p. 238.

only on an individual basis so far. For instance, aviators forced down at sea use stills capable of yielding one quart a day. Units producing seven to nine gallons per day are sold to Australian farmers. The cost of water produced by solar distillation is about three dollars per thousand gallons.¹⁹

The third main process is the electric membrane method. This method takes advantage of the fact that salts do not exist in water as neutral molecules, but as positively and negatively charged ions. When positive and negative electrodes are immersed in the water, the positive ions migrate toward the negative electrode, and the negative ions migrate toward the positive electrode.

A cell is constructed in which membranes are placed, alternating between those permeable only to positive sodium ions and those permeable only to negative chloride ions. When an electric potential is applied, all the sodium ions want to move toward the negative electrode; however, only half of them can do so because only half the membranes allow positive ions to pass. Those which do get through one membrane do not get through the next, which is permeable to negative ions only. The same considerations apply to the chloride ions. The end result is that half of the compartments of the cell contain fresh water, and half the compartments contain doubly salty water.²⁰ A standard cell has three hundred membranes and produces twenty gallons of water per minute.²¹

The principal difficulty with the membrane method is that the electricity required increases with increased saltiness of the water. The membrane method appears to be good for purifying slightly salty water, but does not seem to be feasible as a means of purifying sea water.²² Koalinga, California, which formerly paid seven to nine dollars for one thousand gallons of water, has become the first American city to convert brackish water. Its membrane plant produces fresh water for one dollar and forty-five cents per thousand gallons.²³ There is a very large plant in South Africa converting brackish water to fresh water by the membrane process.²⁴

There are many other processes being worked on. The freezing method takes advantage of the fact that only one-seventh as much energy is required to freeze water as to boil it. However, due to expensive refrigeration equipment and difficulty in separating the pure ice from the salt solution, this method is still in the laboratory stage.²⁵ Another method involves applying pressure to a system consisting of sea water, a membrane, and fresh water.

¹⁹ Clark, "Fresh Water from the Sea," p. 266.

²⁰ David S. Jenkins, "Fresh Water from Salt," *Scientific American*, vol. 196, (March 1957), p. 42.

²¹ Clark, "Fresh Water from the Sea," p. 119.

²² "Brewing a Drink of Sea Water Is Easy—But Still Costly," p. 135.

²³ Greene, "Breakthrough Seen in Struggle to Turn Salt Water into Fresh," p. 21.

²⁴ "Brewing a Drink of Sea Water Is Easy—But Still Costly," p. 135.

²⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 136.

Under pressure the water in the sea water passes through the membrane, but the salt does not.²⁶ Thus far chemical methods have been prohibitively expensive.²⁷

No idea is too fantastic to be proposed. One man has suggested digging a hole fifteen thousand feet deep in the earth and pouring in sea water. The result would be an artificial hot spring. Another proposal involves burning low-grade coal right in the ground, pouring sea water on the coal, and collecting the steam.²⁸ John D. Isaacs has suggested hauling a ten billion ton iceberg from the Antarctic to Los Angeles and there letting it melt.²⁹

What conclusions can be drawn about the feasibility of all these various processes as means of purifying large quantities of water? Certainly distillation and the electric membrane method rank far ahead of the others. Both of these methods are already converting large amounts of sea water at a cost of five or six times that of fresh water. Although the membrane process is used only on brackish water, the United States has enough brackish water under its Great Plains to meet all its present water needs.³⁰ Solar distillation, though used in many places, has yet to produce large quantities of water.³¹ The other methods are still in the laboratory stage.

Purified sea water is not now as cheap as fresh water. However, there are certain situations in which sea water is being used. Outside economic considerations sometimes make converting ocean water practical. For example, the Pacific Gas and Electric Company located its plant in an area without fresh water because of the availability of other raw materials. Fresh water is occasionally very expensive—in Key West, Florida, for instance. Key West has a choice of a 130 mile pipeline from the mainland or a conversion plant. It may soon be cheaper for Key West to convert sea water than to pump in fresh water.³² In some cases there is no choice about converting sea water. Bermuda has no fresh water and must convert salt water.³³

Eight years of extensive research have led to two processes of purifying salt water which are now economically feasible in certain instances. Although there is evidence that neither of these methods can ever produce water as cheap as fresh water,³⁴ the progress made in this field in the last eight years is nevertheless encouraging enough to make one think that soon purified sea water will relieve the pressure on our fresh water supplies.

²⁶ Jenkins, "Fresh Water from Salt," p. 45.

²⁷ *Utilization of Saline Water*, p. 84.

²⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 86.

²⁹ Coleman, "Drink the Ocean," p. 141.

³⁰ "Oceans to Drink?" *Newsweek*, vol. 53, (March 16, 1959), p. 82.

³¹ Dempewolff, "Sea Water for a Thirsty World," p. 238.

³² "Brewing a Drink of Sea Water Is Easy—But Still Costly," p. 133.

³³ Dempewolff, "Sea Water for a Thirsty World," p. 120.

³⁴ Fred A. Loebel, "One Dollar per 1,000 Gallons," *The American City*, vol. 74, (Nov. 1959), p. 181.

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Knowledge, Wisdom, and Power

MERLE LYPE

Rhetoric 102, theme 4

KNOWLEDGE IS A RESULT OF KNOWING OR UNDERSTANDING information acquired through experience. Knowledge can also be practical ability or skill. Knowledge in itself is not an end but a means to an end. Toward that end certain minimum essentials of knowledge are necessary. These are obviously reading, writing, and arithmetic, the basic tools necessary to make one's way in the world. A basic ability in the use of these tools is necessary, but it is not so much the basic ability that is important as what one has learned in the process of acquiring that ability. It is important to know, but it is even more important to know what to do with what one knows.

Wisdom is keenness of judgment and an effective use of knowledge. Wisdom is the way in which knowledge is held. It concerns the handling of knowledge, its use in relevant issues, and its use in every day experiences. Wisdom is the ultimate process of growth in the development of man.

Power is the ability to exert an influence over others. Power can be used for either good or evil purposes. A person who is rich neither in wisdom nor knowledge can attain great power if he possesses the ability to command and control the thinking of others. Hitler and Mussolini possessed great

power for a limited time because they had the ability to persuade great masses of people, but they did not possess the knowledge or wisdom to use the power they held constructively.

The principal mark of a man is not so much knowledge as his attitude in relating his knowledge to the world of experience. It is not knowledge that distinguishes the learned man, but his attitude toward it and his use of it in enlarging his understanding and experience of life.

Rick Kysowsky

CLIFF ROTI

Rhetoric 101, Theme 7

"COME ON, RICK. THIS IS THE BIG ONE!" RICK FELT HIS shoulders being shaken vigorously by the second mechanic. A few moments ago he had been roused from his sleep and had drowsily crawled into his sling-shot dragster. He dropped his white Bell helmet on his head and mumbled to the mechanic, "Yeh, this is the. . ." and forgot the rest of the sentence.

A pinstriped Ford pickup bumped into the frame of the dragster, and Rick Kysowsky loosely reacted to the jolt, bobbing his head in front of him, still hardly awake. The dragster was pushed to the top of a small incline from which it coasted onto the quarter mile point of the old airport runway. The pickup quickly rejoined the dragster, and with a quick push the big fuel-blown Chrysler sent loud, echoing reports through the manifolds. As the pipe-framed machine popped and jerked its way to the starting traps, Rick's head bobbed and jerked lazily with each report of the engines.

Kysowsky had been asleep all morning except when he had been roused for his two previous runs. Rick did not need the sleep; he had slept at least ten hours every day since he arrived. But his body seemed to run on stimulus alone; and when there was no stimulus, he fell asleep. Most of the daylight hours thus saw him either just falling asleep or just awakening. It was this just-awakening state which the spectators saw as Kysowsky's car was pushed into the traps. His eyelids were almost closed; his head hung limply forward and bounced with the rhythm of the powerful machine below him. His hand rubbed across his face. He wiped the grease from his goggles with the ends of his fingers and pulled the sponge-rubber rims down the front of his finger-printed helmet. He signaled to the starter that he would soon be ready.

The pickup backed away from the dragster, and the mechanics quickly pushed it to the line. The opposing dragster was already set. The two blown Chryslers sent out a deafening roar as both engines raced at full speed,

waiting for the start. Smoke piled twenty to thirty feet high behind the dragsters, and a lanky, brown-hatted eighteen-year-old stood in the middle of the strip with tensed starting flags.

This was the stimulus—suddenly Rick was awake. His eyes were opened wide; his eyelids locked in place. The pupils were motionless and intent. Vision ran a thin wire-line from the back of his head to the end of a mile-long blue line. His hands were clenched tight, his leg muscles taut. The tremblings of the dragster frame were rising through his body and piling in the top of his chest. He could feel himself inhaling more air, and his chest muscles were yearning and paining. His whole body was tensed and cocked.

The flag was down. The seven-hundred-pound Chrysler engine exploded with a jerk that slammed Rick back against the frame. A shaft of black smoke shot into the air covering spectators, starter, and dragster, and a fifteen-hundred-pound red slingshot vaulted forward and disappeared in a roaring whine down the quarter mile. Two streams of grey smoke poured from the manifolds and rolled easily to the sides of the strip. In less than nine seconds the rigid figure of Rick Kysowsky flashed by the timing clocks, and the yellow nylon parachute blossomed out behind the dragster. The deceleration jerk sent Rick forward on the steering handles, his hand pumping the brake. But when he pushed himself back from the steering handles, he had immediately changed back to the person who had been awakened in the pit. He slouched over the handles, barely steering the car to the end of the strip; his hand pulled half-heartedly on the brake. The stimulus was gone.

"Way to ride that baby, Rick. This puts us in the dough, fellow!" The mechanics were busy stopping the machine and hitching the tow chain to the front of the frame. The pickup started, giving the dragster a quick jerk which sent Rick's head flopping back. His eyes were now in their usual position—half closed.

As the pickup slowly crawled its way along the graveled path which led back to the announcing platform, Rick slouched backward in the dragster seat, pulled his helmet over his eyes, and lazily dropped his feet over the pipe frame.

The spectators watched eagerly for the top eliminator to come by, but when Rick finally appeared, they were disappointed.

"Look at that lazy sucker, he don't care if he ever wins a race."

"Yeh, you would think someone as good as him would at least act interested. Every hot rodder in the country wants to be like him, and look at that lazy s.o.b."

They all knew Rick Kysowsky; they knew he was good, and they knew how lazy he was. They all knew the man that had started that race, and they all knew the man that finished it; but they did not know the man in the middle—they did not know the man who drove that quarter mile.

Poets, Phoney and Real

GERALD O. MILLER

Rhetoric 102, Theme 9

WHY I WANT TO BE A POET," IS A THEME WRITTEN by Jane Lewis which appeared in the April, 1961, issue of *The Green Cauldron*. This theme is an argument that people "who deserve the adjectives kind, good, noble, and wise" have to hold themselves above the vulgar mass of humanity and remain uncorrupted and "pure" in order to be worthy of these adjectives. Miss Lewis calls the people who do this "poets."

I find it very difficult to agree with Miss Lewis, since I have almost always found that people who outwardly act as if they deserve to be called poets very seldom deserve the title and that a few people who superficially fit Miss Lewis' "description of the 'typical' American . . . the fickle, foul-mouthed, foolhardy persons referred to by their confederates as 'good fellows'" actually do deserve the title.

The basic problem, I believe, is the attitude of the person who believes as Miss Lewis does. By reading the theme in question, with the author's statements about being "sad and disgusted with" or detesting the people who put a crude front up for the world to see, I get the idea that the author has absolutely no use for the vulgar masses, will not try to communicate with them and will do everything possible to keep from associating with them.

Miss Lewis says that her poet "has a more objective view of the confused mass that is humanity." This objective view can be compared to the "objective" view which a man who has never played football has of a football game from the last row of the Los Angeles Coliseum. Both men can see all the action but neither knows what is going on.

The man who watches the football game without understanding it will later tell his friends of that ridiculous game where eleven men bump heads with eleven other men in an attempt to move an inflated ball across a chalk mark on the field. He can neither know nor understand the joy of participating in that rough, tough, body-contact sport.

Miss Lewis' "poet," when he is safely among his friends, who invariably think in the same manner as he does about this subject, talks of the ridiculously low intelligence level of the masses, how unappreciative these masses are of the finer things of life, and generally about how superior he and his friends are to these same masses. This man, as long as this self-enforced isolation from the common people exists, can never know the joy of seeking and finding poets in the masses who may be camouflaged in such unlikely forms as patrons of very low-class bars, waitresses, uneducated old men or garage mechanics?

It is as if these "common" poets are crystals of salt dissolved in the solution of humanity. They can't be seen by merely looking at the solution, but can be discovered by tasting the solution and can finally be isolated by applying the heat of association and communication to the whole solution, distilling the tasteless water off and leaving the crystals of salt to season one's life. The more solution that a person refuses to distill, for any reason, the more crystals of salt he misses.

It is not with the actual qualities of the poet that I quarrel. I agree that he is a rarity. What I have to disagree with is the refusal to associate and communicate with a great part of humanity.

The Girl and the Sea

MARILYN MAYER

Rhetoric 101, Theme 5

IT WAS A GOOD DAY, A PERFECT DAY, SHE DECIDED. THE sky had swollen into blackness vaguely colored with green and yellow like dim lights seen far and fleeting in some night forest. She knew that the sea would be starting to move, to rise and answer the rising storm. She knew that the sea was the sensitive emotion of all the universe, alive and throbbing, sighing and singing its ancient runes. It held the fascination of a living thing whose innermost soul was laid bare before her eyes. And so she hurried to it with quickening steps until, as she came over the sand dunes, she was caught by the slap of the watery wind. The salt burned into her skin and made her excited face flush more deeply. As she walked slowly toward the waves, she felt the wind against her, hard now, the very power that had wept the sea before it to the dark and wondrous lands, lands beyond those waves. To be a wave and see what it had seen! Places she had heard of, Portsmouth, Lorient, Lisbon, and on down the black flank of Africa to the jungle sheltered mysteries of Bolama, Akkra, Mossamedes. Around Cape Town to the rock-faced Madagascar, to Ceylon, across the shallow straits of Malakka and the deep Malayan woods to Borneo, the green Barda Sea and New Guinea. Down, down, down to the great arctic lows swept around by gigantic anticyclones with centers cold and still and sharp. But the wave did not remain still. It streamed across itself and up to the living waters of the South Seas, pregnant with lithe, flashing bodies tumbling over one another. The silver tarpon and the blue-black sailfish, the long-jowled barracuda and the deep bodied pompano, the giant phantom ray and the eel-like, leeching lampreys. And now she saw the writhing, anguished arms of monstrous squids and octopi as they began to sink into the cool blackness with the beckoning gestures of loathesome deformed demons. She saw the eerie twilight of the bottom with the unearthly life of landless earth,

its twining tendrils of unnamed, unknown plants spiraling round the liquid solid of the water, and its subtle skulking animacules, invisibly seen against the deadening sand. And from these slowly throbbing depths she felt a slight tremor and then a steady, insistent rotation circling toward the upper surface. The movement grew more rapid and a profound resonance rolled up from far below. Up and up and up it rose until suddenly the surface yawned wide and churned with a roaring thunder. And now the gaping mouth of the hungry storm began to rush upon the beach in ravening, wolfish waves. She felt it come, the hissing monster to the girl, tickling her feet with playful fingers, drawing her feet with beckoning fingers, drawing her feet with insistent fingers, not grasping at something solid she knew, for slowly she was sinking softly and melting into the whirling, shipping waters. She could feel herself flowing out with the outgoing waves. It was only natural to flow out, to join the water. It was unnatural to be solid, immovable on the shore. Melting and flowing deeper and deeper and deeper . . .

It was not until the next morning that they found her, caught by a rock. They took her away, and the men began to talk, and the women began to whisper. It was sad of course, they said. The mayor and his wife would be heartbroken—after all, their only daughter. But she had always been a willful one—never listening to anyone, stubborn as a rock. She had been told time and time again to keep away from the water when she was alone, and especially when there was a storm. No, she never heard. Just as if she were deaf, insensitive, immovable.

Nuts and Bolts

MARY IMELDA SCHULTZ

Rhetoric 101, Theme 3

The following paragraphs are taken from a character sketch.

Fritz's arrival in town caused more turmoil than the annual carnival. The children would line up along the road to greet him while the adults would shake their heads with disgust. They couldn't understand why children liked Fritz. He not only *was* a hermit, he looked like one. His hair, wet with oil, curled around his ears. The tangled clumps of straw, matted in his hair, were scattered throughout his beard as well. His face and hands were grubby and smeared with grease. His eyes, flickering skeptically from behind bushy eyebrows, were the only thing that lit up his face.

For the children, however, this unkempt old man exerted a strange fascination. It wasn't his personality that attracted them, but the clothes he wore. Fritz was a walking hardware store. His coveralls, sizes too big for him, were pulled tightly to his waist with several pieces of twine. Every inch of

the coveralls was covered with pockets, containing all his personal belongings. Everything from silverware to plugs of tobacco seemed to be filed in those pockets. If a few of them were empty, Fritz filled them with nuts and bolts. From a distance he looked like a lumbering beast whose approach was heralded by the clank of metal striking metal.

Crime and Foolishness — in the Manner of Fyodor Dostoyevsky

JUDY ROSENFIELD

Rhetoric 102, Theme 11

ONE EVENING, AFTER PARTAKING OF THE USUAL DINNER, Chickena Littlevitch Mutzarovna was walking through the barnyard, brooding over the gross misfortune of Gooseveta Loosovna, who, through circumstances of her late paternal parent's making, had been obliged to acquire a yellow passport, and suddenly he heard a voice—far away, and tremulous as a broken-stringed lute—calling to him. The voice fascinated him, and he hurried about, careless of the awkward impression he made upon the various passersby, trying to discover its source.

When he could not discover the speaker—and to his amazement and bewilderment, the voice continued—he began to think that his mind was failing him; to hear voices! The voice became louder, and louder, and louder still. Chickena Littlevitch felt his wings tremble as the other fowl walked blithely about, casually nodding their greetings. Could they not hear? Could they be fooling him, teasing him? No, they simply did not hear. The voice said, "I have something very important to tell you, Chickena Littlevitch." He was stricken dumb with panic and terror. As the voice called him closer, he walked toward the fence. The sound seemed to emanate from the very wood of the gate.

Suddenly—"The sky is falling, Chickena Littlevitch. The sky is falling, and you must save your friends and neighbors. The sky is falling. There is but one safe place—the cave at the base of the hill. The sky is falling, and you, you, Chickena Littlevitch Mutzarovna, must use your influence and good judgment to liberate the members of your community and lead them to safety."

He knew at once what he was compelled to do. His mind raced; he tried vainly to conceive of a plan whereby he could effect the salvation of his comrades, meanwhile maintaining order and keeping panic to the minimum. He glanced above him, fearful lest he see the heavens about to descend. When he detected no obvious movement, he calculated that he would have the

ime—just barely enough time—to gather the other fowl and courageously storm the gate. They must, at all costs, reach that cave, and they depended on him—he was their only link with life.

He remembered a theory he had devised, when he had been a student in the Incubator, when he had been immature, daring. He had then decided that the only way to ever get beyond the wooden fence which was their now-temporary stronghold was to arouse the Farmer, Brownyarovny, and when he walked through the gate, to dart behind, between, and around his legs—to the outside. It had been the most revolutionary of his ideas, and the most inconceivable. Now he could see that he must take the chance, for his fellows.

Chickena Littlevitch ran about, gathering the birds from all the corners of the yard, stridently imploring, hastening, to save all their lives. As the clamor increased, he thought he heard a distant rumble from the sky. He trembled, and began to plead, feverishly, for quiet. When they all had gathered at the gate, he explained the imminent catastrophe—quickly and sharply—begging their indulgence in his childish plan, stressing the hopelessness of any other course.

When he was through, the yard was in an uproar. Duckeeyna Luckar-bitch was comforting the widow Henrietta Pennyovna, and helping her collect her brood. Turkeykin Lurkeyavitch was muttering something about the inevitability of it all, and crossing himself. Only Gooseveta Loosovna was kneeling and earnestly praying. Chickena Littlevitch rushed to her side, grasped her wing, bade her stand, and, with her at his elbow, began to cry, "The sky is falling, fellows, and we have but one course of action—that which I have suggested. Gooseveta Loosovna has consented to help me carry out my plan. Are you ready also?" The others began to protest, but at the sight of Gooseveta, pale and ethereal, her big gray eyes shining with hope—though moist—they all capitulated, and all commenced to raise such a din that Farmer Brownyarovny came running out of the house and threw open the gate.

They rushed past him, taking him completely by surprise. He stood there for a moment, staring in shock and disbelief as he watched his flock race down the hill. He shook his fist after the fluttering, feathery shapes and shouted, "You foolish birds! You run from me straight to the lair of Foxyghin Loxierov!" The birds ran more slowly, as each considered the aspect of Foxyghin Loxierov's lair. None of them knew where it was, but they all had heard tales of his midnight forages. Henrietta Pennyovna began to cluck to her chicks, keeping them close to her. They all stopped suddenly, as each was possessed with the same fear. They would have gone back, but Gooseveta faced them, saying, "Shame on you all! You would turn on your comrade, after he risks his neck for yours. You must have faith, and go on!"

There was a pause, and then, as one, they mumbled a prayer—and went on. They reached the mouth of the cave, and Chickena Littlevitch, bravely, head high, entered first, accompanied by Gooseveta, who called gaily to the

others to follow. Soon, they were all inside the dark cavern, breathless, tripping over pebbles, and cackling ceaselessly.

EPILOGUE

Foxyghin Loxierov was awaiting them, his stew-pot bubbling evilly. One by one, he snatched them up, and plunged them into the cauldron. As he held Chickena Littlevitch over the fire, he whispered softly, in a far-away voice, as tremulous as a broken-stringed lute, "The sky is falling!"

September 3, 1752*

JOHN MANN

Rhetoric 102, Theme 5

Early calendar to **O**N SEPTEMBER 3, 1752, THE SUN DIDN'T RISE, NO LIFE stirred, no one was born and no one died—nothing happened. Yet September 3, 1752, is a very interesting and significant date, especially to English-speaking peoples.

To explain these seemingly paradoxical statements, one must explore the European calendar system and its changes through the years, for the date September 3, 1752, draws its significance from the culmination of these calendar reforms. Europeans, for hundreds of years relied on the Roman Calendar, supposedly instituted by Romulus in 738 B.C. The original calendar, a rather inaccurate invention, consisted of ten months and 304 days and lacked a fixed seasonal commencement date. Roman Emperor Numa Pompilius, in 713 B.C., added two months, but the precision needed for an accurate, lasting calendar was still missing. Then, in 46 B.C., Julius Caesar decided to correct the eighty-day error which had built up, partly because of political manipulating. An Egyptian astronomer, Sosigenes, explained the Egyptian Calendar, which had been in use for 3000 years, to Caesar, and Caesar ordered its adoption with a minor alteration: instead of the unchanging 365-day Egyptian year, an extra day was inserted in every fourth year. This extra day was inserted to compensate for the difference between the 365-day calendar year and the 365.25-day solar year (according to Caesar's calculations). Unfortunately, however, there was an error in these calculations, for the .25 days or six hours should have been .2422 days or five hours and forty-nine minutes. By the sixteenth century this accumulated error amounted to ten days.

In the sixteenth century it was called to the attention of Pope Gregory

Gregorian Calendar

* The factual information in this paper comes from Haydn's *Dictionary of Dates* (London, 1910). The title of the theme was assigned, with no information, as a research project.

XIII of Rome, a very progressive Catholic, that the vernal equinox fell on March 11, instead of March 21. Pope Gregory decided to reform the existing Julian Calendar to correct its error. After careful planning and precise calculating, he ordained in 1582 that October 5 should become October 15: To prevent further irregularity, it was decided that a year ending in a century should not be a leap year, with the exception of that ending each fourth century. (1700, 1800, 1900 were not leap years, but 2000 will be.) In this manner three days are retrenched in 400 years because eleven minutes every four years (the Caesarian leap-year system error) add up to three days in about that period. The year of the calendar is thus made to correspond as nearly as possible with the true solar year, and future errors of chronology are avoided. In fact, it will require 3300 years for the error in the fourth place of the fraction .2422 to accumulate to one day. The Gregorian Reform Calendar was a practical solution to the problem.

Stubborn England, because of her prejudices against Catholicism and the Pope, refused to accept the New Style Calendar in 1582 with the rest of Europe. Having just recently broken with Rome (1534), England would accept no Papal reform. It was 1752 before England relaxed her prejudice against Rome enough to accept the Gregorian Calendar, a vast improvement over the Julian. The acceptance required the correction of the eleven-day error in the Julian Calendar. September 3 was picked as the transitional date and by Act of Parliament was lost forever. In its place stood the true day (according to the solar year), September 14. The eleven days between disappeared; the reform was complete. Nothing happened on September 3, 1752, for there was no such day—it never existed.

My Father's Store

BARRY LEVIN

Rhetoric 101, Theme 2

The assignment was a personal experience-reaction theme strictly limited to 97-103 words. This theme has 99.

I walked into the tavern. In front of me were our country's finest citizens. Dolly saw me first, though I tried to escape her Medusa-like gaze.

"Hiya Barry," she cackled. "What's new?"

"Not much, Dolly," I said.

With that, our conversation ended, for she had already wasted too much time away from her beer.

Bill saw me next. He told me that when he was my age he wanted to be a doctor too.

"Trouble was," he said, "I drank too much and saw too many girls. You know how it is."

I did, but he wouldn't have understood.

Rhet as Writ

After being seated, a waiter offers his service and suggests appropriate meals for the perplexed customer.

* * * * *

Definitions:

cursory: that which curses.

alembic: without feet or limbs.

chauvinism: having to do with the beliefs of Chaucer.

* * * * *

How can anyone expect to learn anything in a class of 35 with an overburned teacher?

* * * * *

If these embassies are not maintained with the highest of standards the American prestige reclines and the possibility for world peace reclines with it.

* * * * *

I don't know about anyone else, but I'm a most convicted liberal.

* * * * *

If there were only a way to teach the children of the future not to bungle up the high schools years with foolishness of all types and have them study more than they do now, the education problem will be one step ahead towards solvency.

* * * * *

The woman just missed him because she wasn't fast enough in her reactions to do anything. There are many more instances like these which illustrate men are better drivers.

* * * * *

Adults are those people who are old enough to except reality.

* * * * *

Of diplomats: They go to these countries, live in big houses, and entertain on very large scales.

* * * * *

Every man is proud of his wife for helping serve the community with her spare time, whether she is president of the Parent Teachers Association or just bringing home some gossip.

* * * * *

What good does knowing Greek and Roman culture due?

The Contributors

Karen Meckler—Cleveland Heights, Cleveland, Ohio

Elen B. Watt—Monticello Prep, Godfrey

Preston L. Schiller—Sullivan, Chicago

Joe Miles—University High, Urbana

Merle Lype—Downs

Cliff Roti—Rock Island

Gerald O. Miller—Gerard

Marilyn Mayer—York Comm. High, Elmhurst

Mary Imelda Schultz—Reddick

Judy Rosenfield—Niles Township, Skokie

John Mann—Jacksonville

Barry Levin—Roosevelt, Chicago

AWARDS

The *Caldron* will continue its policy of giving awards to the five best themes in each issue. The winners will be selected by the votes of the members of the freshman rhetoric staff.

The schedule of awards is as follows:

- First: Fifteen dollars and five dollars worth of books**
- Second: Ten dollars and five dollars worth of books**
- Third: Five dollars and five dollars worth of books**
- Fourth: Five dollars worth of books**
- Fifth: Five dollars worth of books**



We wish to thank the following bookstores for their generosity in providing prizes:

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U. of I. Supply Store (The "Co-Op")